



Ministry
of Defence

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2014/00216

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17 October 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

Release of Information

Thank you for your correspondence dated 3 June 2014 requesting copies of the annual health, safety and environmental reports, or equivalent, for HMNB Clyde for 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13 and, if completed, 2013-14. Your enquiry has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please find enclosed copies of the health, safety and environmental reports for HMNB Clyde for 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13. As you correctly surmise, the 2013-14 report is not yet complete, however, we will forward you a copy of that report when it becomes available – currently estimated to be the end of 2014 at the earliest.

For your information, there is a typographical error in both the 2009/10 and 2010/11 reports within Section 4 under the heading "Environment". Articles 4.9 of the 2009/10 and paragraph 4.11 of the 2010/11 report both refer to a "Breakdown of Nuclear Events" when it should read "Breakdown of Environmental Incidents".

As you will see, some of the information in the 2009-10 and 2011-12 reports is considered to fall within the scope of the exemptions at section 26(1)(b) (Defence) and 27(1)(a) (International Relations) of the Act. As both these exemptions are qualified, it has been necessary to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemptions outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Under s26(1)(b) of the FOI Act information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of any relevant forces. It is recognised that release of this information would increase understanding of the way in which the MOD supports Royal Naval vessels at HMNB Clyde. However, we believe that revealing details of that support would provide valuable information to potential adversaries wishing to exploit weaknesses in the shore based support to our warships. On balance, therefore, it has been concluded that the public interest lies in ensuring that the operational

effectiveness of the RN's fleet remains intact and, as such, this information has been withheld.

Under s27(1)(a), information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the interests of the UK abroad or the promotion or protection by the UK of its interests abroad. Releasing this information would demonstrate the MOD's commitment to transparency and openness on Defence matters relating to the operation of the RN fleet employed in the UK's Defence programme, and those of its International Partners. However, this must be balanced against the fact that disclosure of this information would be likely to prejudice the UK's relationships with other nations. On balance, the public interest lies in ensuring that both UK and foreign navies continue to enjoy unimpeded access to the global network of berths. It has been concluded that this information is withheld.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Deputy Chief Information Officer, 2nd Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>

Yours sincerely

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